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Southern District of West Virginia**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**LINCOLN COUNTY WOMAN SENTENCED FOR STEALING FEDERAL BENEFITS**

CHARLESTON, W.Va. – Leslie R. Nelson, 36, of Ferrellsburg, Lincoln County, West Virginia, was sentenced to five years probation today by United States District Judge John T. Copenhaver, Jr. for the theft of government funds. Nelson admitted to filing a false claim with the Social Security Administration, claiming that her husband had moved out of the couple's residence and was not providing financial assistance to her. Nelson further admitted to fraudulently asking for disability benefits from Social Security to supplement her income when, in fact, Nelson's husband had not moved out of the home and was producing an income. From March 2003 to June 2009, Nelson received more than \$30,000 in benefits that she was not entitled to receive.

The defendant was ordered to pay \$30,545 in restitution to the Social Security Administration.

The investigation was conducted by the Social Security Administration's Office of the Inspector General with assistance from the Social Security Administration claims representatives from the Logan (WV) Field Office. Assistant United States Attorney Erik Goes handled the prosecution.

This case was prosecuted as part of the U.S. Attorney's Initiative to Combat Theft of Government Benefits launched in June 2008. The initiative is designed to protect public funds and to prosecute those who steal benefits from public programs or agencies such as the Railroad Retirement Board, U.S. Veterans Administration, Social Security Administration, and the Department of Labor.

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